



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
2nd Floor of City Hall
Richmond, VA 23219
www.richmondgov.com

Meeting Minutes - Final Urban Design Committee

Thursday, March 7, 2019

10:00 AM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

Roll Call

Present -- 6 - * Chris Arias, * David Johannas, * Andrea Quilici, * James W. Klaus, * Chair
Andrea Almond and * John Reyna
Excused -- 3 - * Jill Nolt, * Andrew P. Gould and * Emily Smith

Approval of Minutes

1. [UDC MIN 2019-02](#) Minutes of the regular meeting on February 7, 2019

Attachments: [DRAFT UDC MIN 2019-02](#)

A motion was made by Committee Member Quilici that these Minutes be approved. Committee Member Klaus seconded, the motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 2 - Andrea Quilici and James W. Klaus
Excused -- 3 - Jill Nolt, Andrew P. Gould and Emily Smith
Abstain -- 4 - Chris Arias, David Johannas, Chair Andrea Almond and John Reyna

Secretary's Report

Mr. Joshua Son reported that staff reviewed and approved banners for the 10th Street YMCA. The banners are to be on display from February 28, 2019 to February 28, 2020.

Consideration of Continuances and Deletions from Agenda

CONSENT AGENDA

REGULAR AGENDA

2. [UDC 2019-12](#) Final 17.05 review of new GRTC Bus Shelters, city-wide

Attachments: [UDC Report to CPC](#)
[Staff Report to UDC](#)
[Location & Plans](#)

Mr. Son: The City of Richmond and GRTC Transit System worked collaboratively since

January 2016 to develop a new bus network known as the Richmond Transit Network Plan (RTNP) that restructured the existing transit routes in a manner that would provide seamless connectivity to the GRTC Pulse Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The RTNP and the Pulse were launched June 24, 2018. GRTC has been monitoring the system, identifying bus stop locations that need improved amenities, especially shelters.

GRTC conducted a survey to gather feedback on design preferences from the public on what they believe would be an improved bus shelter for the City of Richmond. The survey was conducted online via SurveyMonkey and in-person. The results of the survey were used in the shelter selection process.

Survey respondents selected the desire to have continuity amongst the new shelters with the PULSE stations. The majority of respondents preferred a modern design, with a slanted roof, and dark metal features.

GRTC has selected the Brasco Eclipse series with sloped roof in matte black. The shelter design has width and depth ranges which provide footprint flexibility dependent on the width of the sidewalk and frequency of use of the bus stop.

Shelters will include a matching bench with armrests, and advertising/map case and solar panel lighting options. The structure material will be aluminum; the structure color will be black, powder coated; the roof style will be sloped; the roof color, matte black; the panel material, tempered glass; the bench will be black, with armrests; and the add-ons will be a map case, GRTC advertising display, and solar lighting.

Staff believes the applicant has proposed a shelter design that addresses survey respondents' concerns with a design that adapts to various sidewalk widths, seating, maps, and solar panel options. Therefore, it is Staff's position that the Urban Design Committee should recommend that the Planning Commission grant final approval.

Andrea Quilici: What kind of lighting will the shelter have?

Adrienne Torres of GRTC: It will be solar LED lighting; the panel will most likely be on the left or right side, on the roof. It takes up one of those roof sections. We're not doing the clear tempered glass roof, it will actually be opaque.

Mr. Quilici: What type of fixture and where will it be located?

Ms. Torres: The fixture will be in the middle. I did not bring an example with me.

Mr. Quilici: How long is it? Is it integrated into the bay, in the center?

Ms. Torres: Each of them is about a foot.

Mr. Quilici: If it could be full length, it would be more helpful – so it doesn't seem like something added on.

Mr. Quilici asked about the side information panel of the shelter, and what it would be made of. Mr. Torres stated that it is tempered glass with a powder coated aluminum frame, which will be backlit by the solar panels.

Ms. Torres confirmed that bus shelter size will be dictated by number of passengers and sidewalk width. Mr. Quilici asked what their maximum length would be. Ms. Torres stated that the biggest would be 16 feet long, standard sizes being 8, 10, 12, and 16. The 16-foot shelter would include an 8-foot bench and space for two wheelchairs.

John Reyna: How deep is the depth?

Ms. Torres: They are 47 ½ inches deep, which should be about the same as current shelters.

Mr. Reyna: And the city's making sure that as dimensions change there's an accessible path?

Ms. Torres: Yes; let's say it's a narrow sidewalk but we need to keep 5 feet clearance. We would do something like that one [shelter image] on the bottom: it still has the coverage but doesn't get the side panels. Ms. Torres stated that a 16-foot shelter with full-length panels will be the default, but that panels can be modified as space constraints require.

Mr. Quilici asked if there will be signage to identify stations. Ms. Torres stated that the current signage, which has the stop number, would be continued. This is on a ten-foot pole, with the GRTC logo, next to the shelter.

Ms. Almond asked about the reasoning behind the black powder coated finish, and whether this would create maintenance issues. Ms. Torres stated that the black was chosen for continuity of color scheme with other shelters already in place. Ms. Almond asked if there was a warranty, and Mr. Quilici asked if the black metal is scratchable. No clear answers were given.

Mr. Klaus: What's the rollout plan? Are they going to go where there are none, or are they going to replace existing?

Ms. Torres: It will be a little bit of both. There is a 6-month lead time on the manufacture and production.

Ms. Almond: Where are they manufactured?

Ms. Torres: Madison Heights, Michigan. We are going to replace a few on Broad Street. That is our goal for this fiscal year. With the money from next fiscal year, we've identified new locations, so that's going to be our priority – places that we changed in the network that currently don't have benches or shelters.

Mr. Klaus: It sounds like the transfer plaza is already taken care of. The ones with the little round things are gone.

Ms. Torres: They're not yet. Three [new ones] have been installed today. The other six, the older versions, are still there. The next three will be installed in the next week or two, and then hopefully take them all [the older shelters] out.

Mr. Klaus: And those are a bit more generic than these.

Ms. Torres: Yes, they're more traditional.

Mr. Quilici asked what would happen to the old shelters. Ms. Torres stated that they would be recycled.

Mr. Arias: I would highly recommend that you keep the color temperature down to 2700 or 3000. I'd also be concerned about the direction and focus of the lighting. It would be best to keep the light focused down and into the shelter. LEDs can be particularly harsh and blinding. Maybe if it's shielded or pointing down, since it will be at the back side of the shelter.

Mr. Johannas asked about the shape, direction, and configuration of the lighting fixture. Ms. Torres stated that it is a round tube, and has a cover which directs the light down.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Son mentioned that in a previous review there was discussion about the rooftop color, since black tends to create higher temperatures, which could be an issue in the summer. Since we have solar panels now, that was irrelevant.

A motion was made by Committee Member Johannas, seconded by Committee Member Quilici, that this regular agenda item be recommended for approval to the Planning Commission with the following conditions:

- That the attached LED light is the full width of the bay of the shelter
- That the attached LED light is set in a way that shields glare from passersby, including drivers
- That the attached LED light is 3000k or less

The motion carried by the following vote:

3. [UDC 2019-09](#) Conceptual location, character, and extent review of the Byrd Park Tanks roof replacement, 600 S. Arthur Ashe Boulevard

Attachments: [UDC Report to CPC](#)
[Staff Report to UDC](#)
[Location & Plans](#)

Mr. Son: The existing Byrd Park Reservoir is located at the southern end of Arthur Ashe Boulevard in Byrd Park. This water storage reservoir is familiar to many residents because of the 20-foot high earthen berm that forms the reservoir walls, and is a little over 8 acres in size.

The Byrd Park Reservoir was built in 1876 and was provided with a pre-stressed concrete roof in the early 1970s that fully enclosed the open-air reservoir to form two 25 million gallon tanks. The existing concrete tank roof is reaching the end of its useful life and is being scheduled to be replaced by two new aluminum roofs.

The Department of Public Utilities plans to upgrade this water storage facility with the following improvements in addition to the tank roof replacement:

- Replacing existing tank outlet gates
- Upgrading tank overflow piping systems
- Replacing existing tank inlet and outlet valves
- Constructing new City Zone 2 North Transmission Main around the tanks for improved system reliability and redundancy
- Providing tank security system enhancements
- Providing tank ventilation system improvements
- Providing new tank mixing systems for water quality enhancement
- Constructing a new electrical and control building
- Providing other water storage facility upgrades and improvements

In order to provide adequate roof drainage, the proposed new aluminum tank roofs will have a slightly higher level at their center than the existing concrete roofs. The new roofs will only be slightly more visible than the existing roofs because of the height of the existing earthen berms that surround the tanks.

It is planned that the old concrete stairs on the east and west side of the tanks be

removed to improve park user safety levels. The existing concrete stair on the south side of the tanks will be replaced by a new upgraded concrete stair to allow the operator safer access to the tanks.

The tanks will be provided with new overflow systems that need free discharge vents at grade level at the tank earth berms. It is proposed that each overflow vent be provided with a small structural security enclosure that is recessed into the earthen berms to minimize park user impacts. These overflow vent structures will have architectural cast stone exterior walls that are similar to those of the Columbus Pumping Station Electrical Building which is located on the northwest corner of the existing tank earth berm. The two northern access drives from Arthur Ashe Boulevard and the fencing system around the top of the tank earthen berms will not be significantly altered by this project. It is planned that two existing northern access drives from Arthur Ashe Boulevard will be used for removal of the existing concrete roofs and construction of the two new aluminum roofs and for making other water storage tank upgrades and improvements. The use of these existing tank access drives for construction traffic will limit project impacts on park users. The existing cobblestone pavers at the Arthur Ashe Boulevard entrances will be removed during construction and then replaced when the project access work to the tanks has been completed.

The proposed tank valve replacements and piping system improvements on the east side of the Trafford Pumping Station will be routed through the park to minimize overall impacts, but it is expected that some existing tree removals will be needed. It is planned that some new trees will be provided at better locations within the park.

The estimated construction costs for the tank roof replacement project is \$40,500,000. The City of Richmond, Department of Public Utilities will finance this project from their Capital Budget. The City is planning to initiate construction on this project in the fall of 2019.

Therefore, it is Staff's position that the Urban Design Committee should recommend that the Planning Commission grant conceptual approval with the following conditions:

That the applicant consider and provide an explanation of possible alternatives to minimize the visibility of the roof from surrounding areas.

That the applicant provide necessary materials, when appropriate, for final review.

Steve Morgan, with the City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities, stated that the existing reservoir roof is about 47 years old and has outlived its usefulness.

Mr. Klaus: He indicated that at the center point it [the new roof] is 15 feet higher. Is it also higher at the perimeter?

Roger Cronin of the engineering firm Greeley and Hansen introduced himself.

Mr. Cronin: The perimeter wall varies in height from 3.3 feet to about 5 ½ feet. The new roof will have a perimeter height of about 4 feet all around. The reason for the height is that with an aluminum roof you need to give it some slope to get the drainage off.

Mr. Reyna: There was some concern at the recent Museum District meeting about the height of the electrical building. Have you looked at alternate locations for that?

Mr. Cronin: Yes, we've looked at two options. We were initially considering a building with interior height of 15 feet. We looked again and that could be reduced in size to one

with only 10 foot height. So that could be reduced in size and would also be moved from the northern face of it. In the summer the trees will screen it, and even in the winter it's hard to see through those trees.

Mr. Arias asked if there was a reason the electrical building is on the north side, not the south side. Mr. Cronin explained that in terms of electrical connections and existing duct banks, it is simpler and easier to have it on the north side. The option of putting everything in the existing electrical building was also considered, but was rejected due to the bulk of the duct banks and electrical needs throughout the building sequence.

Mr. Arias: How long will the project take?

Mr. Cronin: 9 months for the piping work and a year each for the roofs.

Mr. Quilici: Are you planning to provide additional trees around the perimeter?

Mr. Cronin stated that they have not met with the arborist yet, but that some already compromised trees will have to be pulled down and new trees will be installed where they don't conflict with the buildings and installations.

Mr. Quilici: Are you going to submit to us a planting plan?

Mr. Cronin: Yes, that we will do when we get into the detailed design.

Mr. Cronin explained that other equipment close to the park will need replacement, which will also have an impact on trees.

Mr. Quilici suggested that planned tree placement be kept in mind as the design is planned. Mr. Cronin agreed that they would do so, and pointed out that some old trees are dying so their falling must be planned for as well.

Mr. Johannas asked about the roof composition. Mr. Cronin stated it will be a dull aluminum, the same as has been installed on the City water treatment plant. The dull finish was chosen in response to neighborhood concerns.

Mr. Johannas asked about the purpose of the water tanks. Mr. Cronin stated that they store 50 million gallons, and that the water flows by gravity to downtown Richmond, as it was designed to do in the 1800's. In addition, now the two pumping stations convey the water to the west side of the city. About 60% of the water from the water treatment facility flows through this reservoir.

Ms. Almond asked which neighborhood associations had been met with. Steve Morgan stated that several had been contacted, the Museum District Association was met with, and a meeting is planned with the Carillon Civic Association.

Ms. Almond asked if a more aesthetic fence material was considered. Mr. Morgan stated that fence replacement was not considered, as the new construction's impact on the fence will be minimal.

Mr. Quilici asked about the composition of the vertical portion of the roof; Mr. Cronin stated that it is concrete, which has been patched due to cracks, all of which will be replaced with new concrete.

Mr. Klaus asked if the laying of pipes meant that nothing could be replanted. Mr. Cronin

stated that the current drawings do not reflect exact pipe locations, and that new plantings would take into account proximity to curbs. Mr. Klaus stated that landscaping on all four sides is important for screening, the north side perhaps most important due to visibility. Mr. Arias suggested that smaller trees could be planted, which would allow for greater flexibility in replanting if necessary.

Mr. Arias asked if there were any plans for water retention from roof runoff. Mr. Cronin stated that roof runoff is currently collected via pipes, and that if in future the city wants to consider harvesting it, this collection could be diverted for that purpose.

There was no public comment.

In response to a question from Mr. Klaus, Ms. Almond confirmed that this is a conceptual review, and that among staff suggestions for the final review is that the applicant consider and provide a list of alternative materials to mitigate roof visibility, and that material samples be provided for review.

Ms. Almond stated that she would like, for final review, to also see a detailed planting plan. Mr. Klaus suggested that a new fence, not chain link, be considered as an addition to the project. Mr. Arias asked if a more decorative fence, or a more unnoticeable fence, would be desirable. Ms. Almond stated the latter is preferable. Mr. Arias suggested painting the existing fence. Mr. Klaus stated that with the current fence the site looks like a jail. Mr. Johannas suggested tree plantings to alleviate this. Mr. Klaus stated, and Mr. Cronin confirmed, that plantings are inadvisable on the earthen berm, due to the difficulty of removing them when they die or are damaged.

Mr. Reyna asked that the applicants consider making the pedestrian path on the Blanton Street side of the property more distinct and usable, by adding gravel or some other substance to mitigate the muddiness. Mr. Cronin stated that the paths has been discussed during planning. Mr. Reyna emphasized that the path improvement need not be fancy or expensive.

Mr. Arias asked if this project falls under capital improvements, and whether it would thus fall under the 1 Percent for the Arts ordinance. Mr. Morgan stated that he could check on that. Mr. Cronin pointed out that other counties' Public Utilities budgets might factor in.

A motion was made by Committee Member Almond, seconded by Committee Member Johannas, that this regular agenda item be recommended for approval to the Planning Commission with the following conditions:

- That the applicant consider and provide an explanation of possible alternatives to minimize the visibility of the roof from surrounding areas**
- That the applicant provide necessary materials, when appropriate, for final review**
- That the applicant provide a tree demolition plan including a detailed planting plan, for final review**
- That the applicant consider and provide an explanation of possible improvements to pathway materials and circulation**
- That the applicant consider and provide an explanation of possible alternatives to fencing design (around the reservoir roof)**
- That the applicant confirm if this project is eligible for a 1% allocation for public art, and if so, that the applicant include public art**

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 6 - Chris Arias, David Johannas, Andrea Quilici, James W. Klaus, Chair Andrea Almond and John Reyna

Excused -- 3 - Jill Nolt, Andrew P. Gould and Emily Smith

4. [UDC 2019-13](#) Final location, character, and extent review of the Southside Community Center Master Plan, 6255 Old Warwick Road

Attachments: [UDC Report to CPC](#)

[Staff Report to UDC](#)

[Location & Plans](#)

[Public Comment](#)

Mr. Son: The City of Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities (DPRCF) plans to begin phased construction of the Southside Community Center Master Plan site adopted by the UDC and Planning Commission in 2018. The overall site redevelopment plans within provide construction documents and details needed to construct exterior park features in the approved master plan. These elements include an entry plaza and drop-off, playground, skate park, community garden, orchard, basketball court, softball field, multi-purpose field, and trails. Final plans for the community center building renovation/addition are not included in this UDC package, as funding does not currently allow for final design and construction of this facility.

The City of Richmond Department of Parks Recreation and Community Facilities purchased the Southside Community Center property in 2014 with the goal of creating a regional park to provide diversified recreational opportunities for the residents of the Midlothian Planning District. In the spring of 2015, the design team of Worley Associates and Timmons Group was engaged to prepare a master plan for the park. This master plan was adopted by the UDC and Planning Commission in 2016. In 2018, the master plan was revised and updated to meet the current needs of the City. This plan was adopted by the UDC and Planning Commission in the spring of 2018 and serves as the current site master plan.

Currently, the city is receiving bids to demolish the existing buildings on site with the exception of the existing gymnasium and boxing trailer which will remain until the new community center is constructed. The site work will be phased as funding becomes available; these plans represent future conditions of the total site improvements.

This project is funded through the City of Richmond's Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Currently, there is approximately \$1,360,000 available for this project. These available funds are scheduled to be used for demolition of selected buildings on the site, site preparation, and for the construction of a new skate park. The Department of Parks Recreation and Community Facilities has requested additional CIP funding totaling \$14,000,000 (\$7,000,000 in FY2020 and \$7,000,000 in FY2021).

Due to the necessary phasing of this project, construction will involve the following sequence and general timeline:

1. March 2019 – July 2019: Demolition of existing buildings on site (except for gymnasium and boxing trailer)
2. October 2019 – March 2020: Construction of Phase I site work (scope TBD based on funding)

3. TBD – Construction of Phase II site work (as funding allows)

4. TBD – Construction of Building / Community Center (as funding allows)

Staff finds the project to be well-considered, with the renovation and repurposing of key structures, the continued utilization of specific existing paved areas, and the programming of compatible indoor and outdoor activities. Staff further finds the proposed plan improves the programming of the site, providing a better mix of active and passive uses as well as enhanced cohesiveness overall.

There was a public comment from a neighbor who supports the plan but has concerns about maintenance. Additionally, in discussions Mark Olinger has brought up the subject of public art. The applicant has mentioned that they are providing public art, specifically, potentially, in the skate park.

Mr. Klaus asked if the Urban Design Committee will have occasion to review this application again, in light of its being a multi-year project. Mr. Son confirmed that the Committee would not, as long as nothing in the plan is modified.

Ms. Almond asked if Committee members had any questions for the applicant. They did not. Ms. Almond stated that the applicants had done as much as they could to incorporate changes requested in previous review, and that the final plan looks very nice.

Dexter Goode of Special Capital Projects Group stated that bids have been received for demolition and the applicants are nearly ready to reward that contract. He stated that the schedule is slightly behind and that demolition will hopefully begin in April, and hopefully the projected budget figures will come through.

Ms. Almond mentioned the maintenance concern voiced by the public, and asked if Public Works has a plan for this.

Nathan Burrell, Facility Maintenance and Operations Manager for the Southern District, Parks and Recreation Department, introduced himself.

Mr. Burrell: We as a department recognize that as new projects come on line, we need to build maintenance management plans around what those facilities will be like and what the needs are. As this plan is finalized, our department will be working to build such a plan in conjunction with Timmons Group to insure that not only do we have proper staffing to maintain the facility but also that we have the proper operational budget to do so. There was no public comment.

A motion was made by Committee Member Arias, seconded by Committee Member Quilici, that this regular agenda item be recommended for approval to the Planning Commission as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 5 - Chris Arias, David Johannas, Andrea Quilici, James W. Klaus and Chair Andrea Almond

Excused -- 3 - Jill Nolt, Andrew P. Gould and Emily Smith

Abstain -- 1 - John Reyna

5. [UDC 2019-10](#) Resolution of Appreciation for Committee Member Giles Harnsberger

Attachments: [GH Resoultion of Appreciation](#)

6. [UDC 2019-11](#) Resolution of Appreciation for Committee Member Robert Smith

Attachments: [RS Resolution of Appreciation](#)

OTHER BUSINESS

Resolutions of appreciation were approved by the Committee for retired Committee Members Giles Harnsberger and Robert Smith, and read into the record by Committee Secretary Joshua Son.

Mr. Quilici asked if there was any update on the revision of Committee guidelines. Mr. Son stated that he is in the process of collating Committee comments into a matrix, and that he would like to allow new Committee Member John Reyna time to give his own comments. When these are collated, Mr. Son will schedule a workshop meeting with Mark Olinger and other relevant staff members to discuss and draft an iteration of the guidelines which can then be approved. Mr. Quilici suggested that former Committee Member Robert Smith's lighting guidelines be codified into the guidelines. Mr. Son stated that these could be reviewed, as well as other pertinent comments such as Mr. Olinger's about Cobra lighting.

Mr. Quilici asked about the status of recruiting a Static Arts member for the Committee, to reach a full roster of Members. Mr. Son stated that he has not yet had a chance to meet with the Clerk's office to come up with a new description of the position, reflective of Committee Members' desire to elaborate more on what Static Arts means. Mr. Son stated that there may be other areas for which similar representation is desired, such as Transportation, Right of Way, Urban Forestry. Mr. Son stated that, with permission of Mark Olinger and other staff, he would like to meet to revise the Static Arts position; Planning Commission may have to be involved in such a change, also.

Ms. Almond asked, and Mr. Son confirmed, that in the meantime if someone applies for the position, their application can move forward.

Mr. Son asked that Committee Members let him know if changes are desired to the layout and content of the Staff Reports which are written for each project application. He added that additional project information can be provided to Committee Members as needed, upon request.

Mr. Klaus suggested that the Description section could be briefer, since it repeats content that is elsewhere in the application package; but that the project History section is very important and useful. Mr. Son explained that historically the description has been included for the benefit of the public. Mr. Klaus stated that it need not be removed, but could be abbreviated.

Ms. Almond stated that the presentation of the application during the meeting could also have a more abbreviated version of the description. She also mentioned that Mr. Son's predecessor would sometimes begin UDC meetings by providing a rundown of recent Planning Commission votes on projects that had gone before UDC. Mr. Son stated that this is a great idea. Mr. Klaus and Mr. Quilici spoke in support of the idea as well.

Adjournment

Ms. Almond adjourned the meeting at 11:20 AM.

